



**NORTHCENTRAL UNIVERSITY  
ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEET**

Student: **Michael Higley-Vance**

**THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETELY FILLED IN**

**Follow these procedures:** If requested by your instructor, please include an assignment cover sheet. This will become the first page of your assignment. In addition, your assignment header should include your last name, first initial, course code, dash, and assignment number. This should be left justified, with the page number right justified. For example:

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**Save a copy of your assignments:** You may need to re-submit an assignment at your instructor's request. Make sure you save your files in accessible location.

**Academic integrity:** All work submitted in each course must be your own original work. This includes all assignments, exams, term papers, and other projects required by your instructor. Knowingly submitting another person's work as your own, without properly citing the source of the work, is considered plagiarism. This will result in an unsatisfactory grade for the work submitted or for the entire course. It may also result in academic dismissal from the University.

**EL7010-8**

**Dr. Linda Collins**

**Online Learning for the K-12 Students**

**Activity #8: Signature Assignment – A  
Plea for Online Learning**

**Comments:** See link to presentation here → <http://my.brainshark.com/HigleyMEL7010-8-8-68206789>.

**Faculty Use Only**

Hi, Michael, this is an excellent presentation demonstrating the reasons and objectives for CMCSS to adopt online learning. The presentation is professionally constructed, includes clear information, and the images are important to each slide. You are engaging the audience by showing district goals and attention to student needs. You have also included and explained the learning theories related to online learning as well. Additionally, the presentation is constructed in a way that it can be accessed anywhere, anytime so

you do not necessarily need to rely on a synchronous meeting to provide this information and it can be reviewed at a later time as well. You have also clearly discussed the staffing needs, why they are necessary, and the support that will be given to the project. Your discussion about enrollment and expectations for students to attend the program includes comprehensive information to set the expectations for this program. You discuss how there are learning centers for students so this does not limit students who may not have a computer and access to the internet from home. The safety issues are addressed well and will make parents and others comfortable with the proactive measures that are being taken. Your example of a sample lesson shows the expectations for activities and participation. Also the inclusion of how you will assess the program is essential for sustainability and continuous improvement. I am sharing this with our dean and lead faculty member as an exemplary example of a signature assignment for this class. I have enjoyed working with you once again and look forward to your continued activities in EL7008. Please let me know if you have questions. I will post your final grade when the class ends. Thanks, Dr. Collins

Dr. Linda D. Collins    21    9    April 26, 2014

A Plea for K-12 Online Learning: Reflection

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## A Plea for K-12 Online Learning: Reflection

### **Introduction**

Technology and the Internet are abundant, rapidly growing, and changing the way teaching and learning happens in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is projected that by 2020 biochemical engineering jobs will increase by 62%, software analysis by 22%, system software developers by 32%, and medical scientists by an overwhelming 36% (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). The United States has always had its share of scientists, engineers, and innovators in the past. However, according to the U.S. Department of Education (2010) comparatively few American students currently pursue expertise in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Therefore, it is important that education, from kindergarten to high school, expose learners to e-learning communities and environments where the skills that these

fields of study require are emphasized. It is with these thoughts in mind that I chose specific elements to highlight in a plea to support online learning in the K-12 public school system.

### **Learner Benefits**

E-learning programs can be justified by observing learner and institutional benefits, and institutional readiness. Learner benefits include flexible scheduling, is time saving, and raises personal academic awareness and efficacy. Flexible scheduling is one of the major student benefits to e-learning because students are able to attend classes and access course materials at a time that is convenient to them (Maddix, 2013).

### **Institutional Benefits**

Institutional benefits of e-learning include cost effectiveness, collaborative learning communities, and standardized curriculum and teaching expectations. Within e-learning communities the focus is on providing high quality instruction to multiple learning styles, abilities, and learning backgrounds (Goel, Johnson, Junglas, & Ives, 2010; Wan, Compeau, & Haggerty, 2012). According to Dobozy (2012) the sharing of information and collaboration between online instructors will allow more institutions to standardize curriculum, teaching practices, and student expectations. Furthermore, as institutions continue to align these practices the will establish collaborative learning communities, which address multiple learning styles (Irvine, Code, & Richards, 2013).

### **Institutional Readiness**

Institutional readiness for e-learning includes evaluating the current state of the learning culture, expected e-learning goals, and the infrastructure of the school district's technology system (Sherry, 1998). This means, before a school district commits the time, budget, and staffing required to maintain an e-learning environment it is imperative that appropriate

assessments be made to determine the institution's overall readiness for implementing a K-12 online program. In order for a K-12 program to be effective the district as a whole must acknowledge the importance of e-learning for preparing students to be college and career ready by 2020. Additionally, the goals for e-learning must align with the goals and initiatives of the district and provide the necessary support needed by instructors, students, and their families to experience success (Irvine, Code, & Richards, 2013).

### **Presentation Rationale**

Public school systems are often driven by budgetary considerations rather than sound empirical and theoretical evidence about teaching and learning. School districts across the United States have experienced a budgetary disaster a time or two and funding crises are always on the horizon. Money is the bottom line in accomplishing district goals and is often one of the most influential aspects of critical decision-making. However, in a school district where there is overwhelming support from the community and a shared vision for preparing students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century work place money isn't where the rubber meets the road. This is true for the Clarksville-Montgomery County school system.

The proposal I created for a K-12 online learning program was developed for the Clarksville-Montgomery county school system located in Clarksville, Tennessee. The plea for an online program comes from the district's STEM initiative, high school credit recovery program, and the seven career clusters each of our high schools academically support. Each of these programs and initiatives align with the district's mission to educate and empower students to reach their potential. Additionally, the district has begun to offer online teaching and learning programs but they are only offered to a select group of students who have medical needs, are behavioral issues, or failing high school students.

### **Planning Reflection**

One of the first things I considered was the different parts of a learning program that would be critical to establishing, implementing, and maintaining its successful start (Maddix, 2013). I decided that I should first establish our school district's demographics and need. In the first few slides I offer information, which identifies the school system's student population, the number of teachers and support staff, and the number of traditional brick and mortar schools currently servicing so many students. It takes a great deal of money and financing to support so many schools, educational services, and transportation options. Additionally, I provided several slides addressing the research that supports such an initiative. My hope, by providing this information, is that stakeholders will begin to see a need for alternative learning environments.

After I completed the demographic and supporting theorist slides I realized that community and district stakeholders would be highly interested in the funding and staffing of such a proposal. In these slides I provide the viable budgetary opportunities currently available to help financially support a K-12 online program in Montgomery County. In addition to providing funding options the question of who will be in charge of leading, instructing, and maintaining the program must be addressed. The staffing slide identifies four key staffing roles, which must be filled to appropriately maintain a K-12 online learning environment (Maddix, 2013). The roles include a program director, tech specialist, online curriculum specialist, and of course the online instructors. Each role presented here also includes a description of responsibilities to the program each must provide for the program's success.

Next, I needed to present district stakeholders with what the implementation of a K-12 online learning program would look like. Therefore, I began with describing the enrollment, orientation, and student learning support processes (Maddix, 2013). On this slide I included

enrollment information, which also provided information about learner and parent responsibilities to learning online. Many times the success of something new is in the planning and support provided from the beginning. Additionally, providing each student with a program mentor, online learning support, and Internet safety is addressed establishing a need for ongoing student and family support (Sherry, 1998).

As I came close to finishing the above-mentioned slides I realized I should include an online sample lesson. A reading lesson was provided to give district stakeholders a brief idea of what a learning experience will be like online (Paily, 2013). In a real presentation I would have laptops available with learning examples set up ready for stakeholders to review. In later presentations I would consider delivering information to stakeholders using sample online learning tools and resources like Voicethread to provide them with authentic online learning experiences (Paily, 2013).

Finally, how can I guarantee the school system that a K-12 learning program will be successful? The best way to monitor a program's success is to monitor and evaluate often (Maddix, 2013; Goel et al., 2010; Rovai, 2003). Nothing is ever guaranteed in education and the institution of teaching and learning is constantly changing. However, I can provide stakeholders with a plan that includes how the program will be monitored and evaluated for its effectiveness and ongoing implementation. In the final slide I provide stakeholders with how the program will be evaluated. The end product, in my opinion, is informative and based on a multitude of research and educational theory.

The presentation to the Clarksville-Montgomery County school system, while important, is only a small step in the journey to establish and sustain an online learning environment. The plea for a K-12 online program and use of collaborative online tools to promote learning,

collaborative communication, ownership, and social interaction meets the standards of constructivists, situated life theorists, cognitive, and behaviorists theorists (Goel et al., 2010; Paily, 2013; Sherry, 1998; Wan, Compeau, & Haggerty, 2012). Most importantly for all stakeholders is to acknowledge a need for quality e-learning experiences and that it is an invaluable component of education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



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